



MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
April 4, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm.

Present: Mayor: Charlie Miner; Council: Jahn Dyvik, and Gina Joyce

Staff Present: City Administrator: Scott Weske; and City Clerk: Jeanette Moeller

Absent: Council: Deirdre Kvale and Mike Feldmann (both with prior notice)

APPROVE AGENDA

A motion was made by Miner, seconded by Dyvik, to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes: all.

OPEN CORRESPONDENCE

No one was in attendance to address the City Council during Open Correspondence.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Discussion of Fire Department Situation and Related Updates

Mayor Miner advised that earlier today, the City's supplemental contracted attorney sent an updated draft of a letter he'd prepared for the City previously including amended language related to the Command vehicle situation.

The Council discussed details related to the Command vehicle purchased by Orono and their hesitancy to use equipment on loan because of the potential precedent and expectation it may set with Orono. The Council also reflected on the existing CIP that they do not feel is realistic and speculated on various equipment needs for the Fire Department. They considered the pros and cons of maintaining status quo while the current contract is still in place; and the possibility of asking the new Fire Chief to complete a needs assessment for the Fire Department from his perspective and possibly with the assistance of a certified technician evaluating the equipment, which may result in creation of a more realistic CIP.

Council member Joyce suggested that the Council ask Fire Chief Heiland to work towards preparing a preliminary needs assessment, CIP, and budget information ready for preliminary discussion at the May 2, 2023 City Council Work Session meeting.

She noted that the City's supplemental consultant had previously prepared a handout regarding key messages and talking points related to the Fire Department situation; the handout had been updated responding to City points of clarification; and at this time she would like to discuss next steps. She gave a brief summary of two possible options that the supplemental consultant had suggested related to messaging.

Council and staff explored ways to give updates to residents about ongoing discussions and options.

Council member Dyvik noted that he is looking to get the negotiating group between Long Lake and Orono back together in order to discuss the proposal from the firefighters, though indicated their proposal appeared to have taken a turn from what was originally presented.

Moeller mentioned that if Council member Dyvik was interested in inviting any particular firefighters to these negotiation group meetings, she would advise checking in with Fire Chief Heiland before doing so to maintain awareness of the LLFD chain of command structure.

Council member Dyvik stated that he thinks it may be best to just keep the original four individuals from Long Lake and Orono involved in the meetings.

Council member Joyce indicated that she felt the City should go ahead and send the letter from the City's supplemental contracted attorney. She recognized that doing so may change things, but commented that she did not think the situation could actually get any worse.

Mayor Miner suggested that perhaps they should wait until the next meeting in order to have a full Council to discuss doing so, and to see if Orono responds prior to that meeting.

Council member Joyce raised the question of how best to convey information to the firefighters and keep them updated as the situation progresses.

Moeller encouraged Council members to appear in person for meetings with the firefighters and added that she believes doing so would carry weight with them, though recognized that doing so may present challenges.

Council member Joyce agreed and noted that she was in favor of holding either monthly or quarterly in person meetings with the Fire Department.

Administrator Weske suggested perhaps bringing pizza and beverages to these meetings as well.

OTHER BUSINESS/WORK SESSION COUNCIL REPORTS

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURN

Hearing no objection, Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting by general consent at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Weske
City Administrator